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8 October 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence
Deputy Director for Plans
Deputy Director for Science and Technology
Deputy Director for Support
General Counsel
Inspector General

SUBJECT : COINS (Community On-Line Information
System) Options Briefing

1. As you probably know, Colonel White has asked me to talk about COINS at the Deputies meeting on 14 October. The purpose is to decide what to recommend to the Director vis-a-vis our participation in the COINS Experiment -- since experience to date has been so unsatisfactory and so much emotion has been generated in the Community; much criticism has been directed at us.

2. Bill Baker of the PFIAB has a former co-worker in the new Science Advisor to the President, Dr. Ed David. Dr. David has asked for a briefing on information handling in the Community, particularly that which is computer supported; he has indicated an interest in the issue of leadership in this field.

3. COINS is a relatively small, but currently highly visible, segment of the larger Community information handling "system" which has been the subject of letters to the DCI from Drs. Rostow and Kissinger. COINS is seen by Baker as symbolic of the Agency's interest, both as participant and potential leader, in developing an effective Community "system".

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GROUP 1
downgrading and
declassification

4. Since the history of this is complex, politically and technically, I thought it might be useful for you to have the attached chronology in advance of the meeting -- particularly to note commitments and comments made to date by the Director.
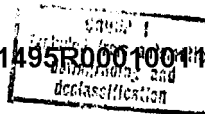
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Chairman, Information Processing Board

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COINS: Chronology of Significant Events

15 July 1965 — McGeorge Bundy sent President-approved PFIAB recommendations on Community information handling to DCI (Raborn). Recommendation 2 was origin of COINS.

15 Sept. 1965 — COINS Committee under USIB Committee on Documentation (CODIB) established. NSA chaired [   ]   25X1

2 Oct. 1965 — DCI (Raborn) response to Bundy and C/PFIAB:

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        -- Noted DIRNSA (Carter) had made Senior Officer [   ] available as advisor.
        -- Briefings on NSA system, [   ] undertaken.   25X1
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        -- CODIB [   ] (1) Formed Working Group on Recommendations 1 and 2 (ADP Training and COINS); and (2) Offered Committee assistance to Bill Knox, Chairman, PFIAB Technical Panel.
        -- Played down focus on PFIAB biographic concerns.

18 May 1966 — ExDir policy paper on CIA participation in COINS. [CIA to participate as fully as possible. CIA to provide store-and-forward communication switch - BOB did not OK funds; DIA volunteered.]

25 May 1966 — Committee published COINS implementation plan. [Network of computers - major conceptual change from PFIAB recommendation, which suggested terminals linked to NSA system. Plan approved by CODIB and USIB, the objective statement highly controversial.]

August 1966 — CIA Task Force memorandum to ExDir re CIA implementation (cost $132,000 for FY 1967).

February 1967 — Communications link between NSA and DIA installed and successfully tested.

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3 Aug. 1967 - ☐ signed for) memo to ☐   25X1
NIPE, complaining of lack of management in COINS.
[Suggests alternatives; seriousness of impact;
absence of objectives; etc.] [N.B. - Deputy Directors
in agreement; NIPE and DDCI (Adm. Taylor) seemed
to see comments as parochial and anti-NSA.]

5 Oct. 1967 - DCI (Helms) memo to USIB re proposed Presidential
Directive on a Community information handling
system (suspended proposed DCIDs establishing
the Information Handling Committee (IHC) as a
CODIB replacement and stating USIB information
handling objectives, pending clarification).

9 Feb. 1968 - Rostow memo (NSAM 368) called for phased implemen-
tation of a Community system, including alternative
management recommendations. Attached PFIAB
"second report on the subject" said:

-- Problem not being addressed adequately.
-- Not exploiting modern S&T techniques.
-- Centralized management would improve overall
intelligence picture.
-- Believe Presidential Directive required.

8 March 1968 - CODIB Panel on Files report ☐ Chairman).   25X1
Emphasis on analyst utility; biographics (per repeated
PFIAB concern).

11 April 1968 - DCI (Helms) memo to USIB: New COINS management
structure. [NSA made Executive Agent; ☐   25X1
overall COINS Project Manager; ☐ NIPE,   25X1
as "my representative - using IHC for staff support."   25X1
This memo to be part of response to NSAM 368, said
the Director.]

April 1968 - DCID 1/4 implements USIB Information Handling
Committee (IHC).

Sept. 1968 - Commo link between CIA/Headquarters, NPIC and
DIA successfully tested.

2

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Oct. 1968   - DCI response to President re NSAM 368:

     -- Transmits preliminary Community Information
        Handling System (CIHS) plan (of which COINS
        experiment is relatively small part).
     -- States DCI will manage the CIHS.
     -- Attaches description of individual agencies'
        systems.
     -- States IHC Annual Report will serve as status
        report mechanism.

5 Nov. 1968 - DIRNSA (Gen. Carter) request to DCI to delay
COINS Master Plan submission and experiment beginning
date.

Dec. 1968   - Memo to DIRNSA from Gen. Taylor, Chairman, IHC
(for the DCI) agreeing to delay.

5 Dec. 1968 - COINS Master Plan submitted by DIRNSA to DCI
(DIRNSA noted CIA had taken exception to COINS
objectives; also states, incorrectly, that participating
organizations were not considered re file design).

24 Dec. 1968 - Acting DCI (Adm. Taylor) responded: concern re
files appreciated (Chairman, IHC, told to look into
COINS file problem).

April 1969   - DIRNSA memo to DCI requesting further six-month
delay in start of experiment to 1 October 1969.

April 1969   - Affirmative response from Chairman, IHC (for the DCI).

22 July 1969 - Agreed COINS objectives sent to DCI by DIRNSA (lack
of formal data standards noted as the most severe
problem in the Community and COINS. Recommended
action on this problem).

August 1969 - Chairman, IHC (for the DCI) responded, noting that
work on data standards was underway in the IHC.

22 Aug. 1969 - CIA informally proposed to IHC single computer
re-design; i.e., cease complex computer-to-computer
network; put single computer, with remote query
terminals, in DIA or NSA or CIA. No response.

Oct. 1969   - COINS six-month experiment officially began.

14 Oct. 1969   - DCID 1/15 - Data Element Standards...issued.

Nov. 1969   - NPIC withdrew due to NSA analyst query re Target Brief Header file (subsequently ruled a T/KH level file).

11 Nov. 1969   - Kissinger memo to DCI re a more effective Community system. PFIAB recommendation - a Presidential Directive providing that:

-- DCI design and manage a unified system as high priority assignment.
-- Exploit modern S&T advances.
-- Establish in O/DCI an Exec. to assist in design and management of the Community system.
-- Produce a phased plan for implementation and explore methods for funding.
-- Etc. (3 more for DCI, 4 charges to member agencies and 1 to Director, BOB, "to provide guidance and support").

Supplementary Recommendations: "Under the leadership of the DCI and the technical direction of the present management of the COINS experiment:"

-- Priority to Sov. biographic continuation.
-- Follow-on to COINS - upgrading it and postponing evaluation for 2 years.
-- Expansion into other biographic areas.
-- NIC automation.
-- 7 others like the PFIAB recommendations of 1967.

1 Dec. 1969   - DCI response:

-- Aware of PFIAB concern and impatience, but much progress since 1967 memo.
-- In two years, the system "has been developed to point of occasional use."
-- Most of Board's recommendations "already are being implemented." [IHC]
-- "Board and I attach highest priority to forward movement in information handling."

1 Dec. 1969
(Cont'd)

-- Each Agency proceed apace - within real world
of budget constraints.
-- Specific comments attached - no need, now, for
Presidential Directive (most answers are in
COINS context - and are misleading).

Winter '69-70 - Charles Joyce, Kissinger's Staff, investigated info
processing in Community. Recommended more CIA
COINS involvement (8 hour/day involvement and more
useful files).

28 Jan. 1970 - CIA member of IHC (Kennedy) read CIA position
on COINS to IHC. [End experiment in March 1970
and begin evaluation phase; CIA willing to continue
system during evaluation until 1 October 1970. Not
supported by other IHC members.]

30 Jan. 1970 - DCI memo to Kissinger (following 8 Jan. session
with Baker et al):

-- Attaches summary of CIA information handling
activities.
-- States his impression that satisfactory progress
is being made.
-- References IHC Annual Report for further status
details.

March 1970 - CIA offered DDI/CRS AEGIS file (index to finished
intelligence). [May prove one of most useful files
in COINS.]

March 1970 - DIRNSA ⬚ request to DCI: 25X1

(a) that CIA be allowed to include multi-compartmented
data in COINS (i. e., CIA and NPIC be on-the-air
8 hours/day);
(b) that COINS experiment be extended two years;
(c) that more responsive files be developed; and
(d) that more user orientation and training be
undertaken.

5

April 1970   - Chairman, IHC (for the DCI) responded, generally agreeing but noting that evaluation should start in less than two years. Two-year extension for programming and budgeting should not be understood as endorsement of COINS in its present configuration. [Alternative Kennedy draft, more strongly worded re evaluation of utility and endorsed by Agency, apparently rejected by Gen. Taylor.]

Apr/May '70   - Undated memo from DIRNSA to DIA, CIA, State: 25X1

         -- Transmits DCI response to request for two-year extension.
         -- Solicits suggestions re funding.

April 1970   - CIA formally requested Project Manager to survey all COINS participants re possibility of including T/KH materials. [No response to date.]

May 1970   - CIA formally proposed re-design of COINS with a single-dedicated computer located in any one of the participating agencies. [No response to date.]

June 1970   - CIA refused to provide $69,000 to share in funding DIA Switch. [Orally advised NSA as Executive Agent to seek supplemental funds from BOB - ExDir letter simply suggests that Executive Agent should fund.]

22 June 1970   - DIRNSA letter to Froehlke, saying:

         -- NSA strong advocate of COINS.
         -- Convinced that "COINS Experiment is progressing well and shows great promise of becoming a major component in the developing Community information handling system."
         -- ExDir, CIA has suggested that NSA, as COINS Executive Agent, fund the experiment.
         -- Suggest NIRB consideration of COINS funding. [Understand that Froehlke said "No" - since DIA had budgeted for the COINS Switch.]

6

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July 1970 — CIA announced that NPIC would return to COINS network in passive mode only (i. e., NPIC can levy queries but it has no files to contribute within the SI security limitation).

July 1970 — DIRNSA memo to DCI asking security waiver so CIA/Hq. could participate 8 hours/day. Also recommended appointment of separate NPIC COINS sub-system manager.

August 1970 — DCI response: Security can't be waived. Agency studying its COINS posture ("concerted effort to sort out problems and chart clear course for future").

12 Aug. 1970 — Informatics, Inc. Draft Report: Study of Alternative Communications Configurations for COINS.

    -- Notes that CIA proposed central computer system has been implemented elsewhere and is well within the state-of-the-art.
    -- Says problem is that it "circumvents the main purpose of the experiment, to determine if existing systems can be networked together to provide an operational environment."

24 Aug. 1970 — CIA Information Processing Board members, after considering COINS options, concluded (reluctantly) that CIA must remain in COINS.

Aug/Sept. '70 — Chairman, CIA Information Processing Board [   ]   25X1
fact-gathering, fence-mending meetings with DIA and NSA IHC members [   ] Joyce   25X1
(Kissinger's Staff) and House (Secretary of Technical Panel that Baker uses for support).

25 Sept. 1970 — NSA's replacement hardware/software not yet operational; no date promised. DIA converting from IBM to GE equipment; has slipped from 1 Oct. 1970 to 10 Nov. 1970. [Ironically: telephone response will be used during that period - the method of information exchange most often proposed by CIA people.]

7

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Related Papers/Events

SCIPS Report (1 October 1963)

NSAM 368 (USIB -D-71. 1/3, 22 October 1968): PFIAB - Rostow - DCI

IHC Community Information Handling System (CIHS) concept.
   (Latest: Inventory of Community Information Handling Systems - 17 Aug 1970)

DCID 1/15 (effective 14 October 1969): Data Element Standards.

Kissinger Memo to DCI of 11 November 1969

DCI response dated 1 December 1969: "Highest priority to forward
   moving in information handling. "

ASPIN Report

ARPA Proposed Experimental Research Facility (ERF)

CIA Organization/Option Deliberations:
   -- Specifically for COINS
   -- Generally

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DATE: 7 Oct 70

TO: Ed RJS

FROM:

SUBJECT: COINS

REMARKS:

I understand Ex.Dir. will set a Deputies' meeting on 14 October for presentation by Briggs and discussion of COINS. Theme will be: Should the Agency stay in COINS and if so, how should we proceed? Prior to meeting Briggs will get out to Deputies a chronology on COINS plus summary of other pertinent information tailored for each Deputy.

Major options to be presented are:

1. Get out of COINS; let DOD go it alone except that NPIC would probably have to stay in as a service of common concern.

2. CIA attempt to take over leadership of COINS--by setting up one big computer here with terminals out to all COINS agencies. This would mean all community files would be on this one computer.

3. Stay with present system with one definite change, i.e., a dedicated computer for COINS. Many sub-options, e.g., organizational and type of computer.

OFFICE OF

DATE:

TO:

FROM:

SUBJECT: COINS

REMARKS:

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[ ] says with regard to option three, if it goes that way, he will recommend a dedicated IBM 360/40 in OCS.

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BACKGROUND READING